

# Prison Industries Streamlines Operations, Improves Efficiencies and Reentry Efforts

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The Prison Industry Authority began its fiscal year with the implementation of several enhancements to streamline its operations and improve quality and service. As a result of instituting these new business practices and reorganizing operations, PIA is projecting a good fiscal year.

“PIA’s new Strategic Business Plan addresses efficiency efforts to improve our business operations that support the overall mission of the recently renamed California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. PIA is introducing several new innovative processes and programs that will provide inmates the ability to obtain employment after their release.

“This is really an investment in public safety, because employed parolees mean safer communities.

“We have already observed positive results as a result of our initial efforts, including an increase of PIA-trained inmates who have paroled

and are now gainfully employed,” said **Matt Powers**, PIA’s General Manager and former Sacramento Deputy Police Chief.

PIA has reduced expenditures through a variety of means, including the elimination of 60 vacant positions. This represents approximately \$4 million in reduced costs. As permitted by the Penal Code, PIA has restructured its procurement process by eliminating the additional cost of purchasing through the Department of General Services. It is anticipated that this effort will decrease procurement costs and will help control prices of PIA products. Additionally, PIA is curbing costs by revamping its distribution and transportation systems.

Several enhancements to PIA’s Inmate Employability Program are also being instituted. Additional emphasis is being placed in assisting inmates to obtain work skills, job certifications, and pre-employment training. Additional staff is being redirected from other positions to better prepare and assist inmates to integrate into the mainstream workforce. The IEP has hired former PIA inmate Christie Shows, who is working to train inmates to obtain employment



after parole and will also be activity at the community level facilitating services for parolee reentry.

In conjunction with the San Diego community, PIA is working to develop a new collaborative program called the “Community Reentry Project” that will assist the reentry of PIA inmates in the greater San Diego area.

This program establishes a community-based organization that provides transitional services to parolees. It is critical that any needed supportive services be provided to the PIA parolee so that successful transition into the community can occur.

In collaboration with the San Diego Sheriff’s Department, the San Diego Workforce Partnership, mental health systems, community and faith based organizations, and local employers, PIA is developing this program that is scheduled to be rolled out this summer. Additionally, an employers’ forum focusing on employing ex-offenders is scheduled for this fall and is designed to highlight the partnership of PIA and the San Diego community.

## Juvenile Division Exec Secretary Deering Retires



*Karen Deering kids with husband Ken, at her retirement party last month. The executive secretary has 39 years of service -- all of it at the former California Youth Authority -- now Division of Juvenile Justice.*